



## Administrative Policy and Procedures Manual

# 1003 USE OF COMPUTER EQUIPMENT AND SYSTEMS

## POLICY

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The Judicial Branch reserves the right to establish and maintain conditions, rules, and regulations regarding the use of computer equipment and access to systems.

## GENERAL INFORMATION

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Computer equipment and computer systems have been provided in order to permit employees to better serve the judges and staff in accomplishing the mission of the Judicial Branch by efficiently and effectively discharging their responsibilities. Because of the size, scope, complexity, and importance of these essential systems, it is imperative that all employees adhere to certain basic regulations. These regulations were promulgated to ensure the integrity of the Branch's automated systems and to reduce excessive systems maintenance costs. Primary among these regulations is: Improper and/or unauthorized use of computer equipment and computer systems is prohibited.

The following represents a baseline list of conditions, rules, and regulations

### General Conditions

- Only employees, volunteers, contractors, and interns who have been granted use of computer equipment and computer systems are permitted to use such equipment and systems.
- Access to computer systems will be determined by the employee's supervisor.
- System passwords should not be shared except with the employee's supervisor or other authorized staff.
- Information concerning security measures regarding the Branch's computers and communication systems should not be disclosed without prior authority from appropriate supervisory personnel.
- Computer equipment and computer systems are not to be used for personal gain.
- Personal use of computer equipment is permitted as long as such use occurs on the employee's time and does not interfere with Judicial Branch business and does not violate the law.
- The Judicial Branch is not responsible for any loss associated with the personal use of Judicial Branch equipment in the event of an equipment or software failure.
- Employees must not deliberately bypass or tamper with security measures designed to protect information and systems (example: Antivirus software.)

## **Desktop Computers Conditions and Regulations**

- In order to limit the Branch's legal liability for the use of unlicensed software and to facilitate support, employees are not permitted to add or delete software programs on their own. Only properly trained technical staff, authorized by an Executive Director may install or delete applications. The computer desktop image that is authorized for use on Judicial Branch computers contains the icons necessary to run the approved programs. Employees may place icons containing "shortcuts" from authorized software on the desktop.
- Freeware/shareware is programming that is offered at no cost or nominal cost. Generally, it is the policy of the Judicial Branch not to use freeware/shareware for normal business applications. Exceptions are made on a case-by-case basis with approval from the Information Technology Division in partnership with the operating division involved. There should be no expectation of support for these applications.
- Screen saver programs may not be downloaded from the Internet or installed from any other sources. There is a potential for screen savers to conflict with Judicial Branch standard software or operating system programs. The screen savers that are delivered as integral components of the operating system are the only ones that are appropriate to use.
- Use of unlicensed software is prohibited.

## **Internet and E-mail Conditions and Regulations**

- Persons accessing the Internet using Judicial Branch computers or network should have no expectation of privacy. Monitoring and recording of sites visited may be undertaken without specific notification according to [Section 1001](#).
- Access to Internet sites that display sexually explicit or other adult content, wagering or gambling, or other offensive content is strictly prohibited.
- The displaying or transmitting of sexually explicit material, the transmission or use of e-mail that contains ethnic slurs, racial epithets, or anything else that may be construed as harassment or offensive to others based on their race, color, creed, marital status, national origin, ancestry, sexual orientation, mental retardation, mental or physical disability, including but not limited to blindness is strictly prohibited and could result in appropriate disciplinary action.
- The downloading of software to a Judicial Branch computer from the Internet is not permitted unless there is a legitimate business need that has been approved by the Judicial Branch. Any such unauthorized action is a violation of Branch policy and is strictly prohibited.
- Access to the Internet with Judicial Branch equipment through a private carrier is prohibited.
- The use of Internet radio, Internet video, streaming audio, streaming video, etc. for personal use is prohibited.
- The personal use of Judicial Branch dial-in facilities to access the Internet during non-work hours is prohibited.
- The personal non-business use of chat rooms is prohibited.
- The business use of Internet Relay Chat (IRC) must be pre-approved, as this functionality is normally prohibited by the Executive Branch's Division of Information Technology.

## PROCEDURES

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Employees with questions concerning the appropriate use of the Branch's computer systems should consult with their immediate supervisors. In the event that the supervisor is unclear about the appropriate answer to an employees query, the supervisor should seek further guidance from their supervisor or manager. It should be noted that issues involving inappropriate content, appropriateness of use, or the impact that specific activities or practices may have upon office or Branch operations are, at least in the first instance, the responsibility of individual office supervisory personnel.

**Questions? – [JIS Helpdesk](#) - (860) 282-6555**